



# Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Baucus Welcomes Montanan as Lead Welfare Reform Staff, Promotes Current Health Staff**

Kate Kahan Takes Over Welfare Issues, Andrea Cohen Adds Medicaid and S-CHIP to Duties

(Washington, D.C.) U.S. Senator Max Baucus today announced that Kate Kahan, a longtime welfare advocate in Montana, will become the lead welfare professional staff member on the Finance Committee beginning January 20. Baucus also announced that Andrea Cohen, who has worked on healthcare policy for the Finance Committee since 2001, will be taking on the additional issues of Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

Kate Kahan will be responsible for working to renew the expiring 1996 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Since 1999, Kate has served as the executive director of the Missoula, Mont.-based Working for Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL) and coordinator of the Western Regional Welfare Activists' Network.

"Kate's tenacity and dedication at WEEL made sure the voices of Montana's low-income families were heard," Baucus said. "She will bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Finance Committee. As we continue to work in Congress to renew the TANF welfare program, I know Kate's years at WEEL, as well as her personal experiences, will allow us to succeed in helping to cut poverty and move more folks off of welfare and into jobs."

Kate, who earned a degree in Women's Studies from the University of Montana in 1999, has extensive experience creating policy that supports low-income Montanans. Kate has taught at the University of Montana and has received several awards honoring her work, including the Center for Policy Alternatives' Emerging Leader Award and the Ms. Foundation Women Gloria Award, which honors women of "vision." In addition, Kate brings an additional level of knowledge to welfare issues having been as a former welfare recipient herself. She is also the mother of an eleven year-old son, Elliot.

"I'm excited to continue carrying out the critical efforts to reduce poverty in Montana on the Senate Finance Committee," Kahan said. "As an instrumental voice for the poor, Max has been a champion for Montana. It's an honor for me to join his team."

Baucus also announced that Andrea Cohen, who has been with the Finance Committee since October 2001, previously as Health Investigative Counsel and now as Health and Oversight Counsel, will be working on all policy issues related to Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, as well as continuing to work on the Finance Committee's general oversight of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). In addition, Andrea will be monitoring the implementation of the low-income subsidy programs in the Medicare prescription drug bill, as well as the State financing issues.

"Andy has done a superb job combining her roles on health policy and oversight since she joined the Committee a few years ago," Baucus said. "I am pleased that she will be taking over the

issues of Medicaid and S-CHIP -- programs that are especially depended upon in my state of Montana."

Prior to joining the Committee, Andrea was an attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice doing civil litigation from 1996 -2001. Andrea received her B.A. from Harvard College and her J.D. from the Columbia University School of Law.

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